

REMARKS

This paper is responsive to the Office Action mailed June 8, 2009. Claims 1-20 are currently pending. Claims 1-4 and 7-18 were previously withdrawn, and claims 5, 6, 19 and 20 stand rejected. Claims 5, 6, 19 and 20 have been amended. Support for all amended claims can be found in the specification, and no new matter has been added by these amendments. Reconsideration of the claims in view of the amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 5, 6, 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

Claims 5 and 19 were rejected because “the corrected user” lacks antecedent basis. Claims 5 and 19 have been amended to change “the corrected user” to “the user” which has antecedent basis in the claims.

Claims 5, 6 and 20 were rejected for including an improper abbreviation. Claims 5, 6 and 20 have been amended to change “DB” to “database”.

Accordingly, the rejection of claims 5, 6 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. 112 is overcome.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 5, 6, 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0065726 to *McGee* in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,987,420 issued to *Maeda*. Without conceding the merits of the rejection, Applicants respectfully submit that the amended claims overcome the rejections.

Claim 5, as amended, recites:

An admission control method for controlling entrance into one or more facilities installed in a site on the basis of an admission ticket having an information memory element mounted therein with a unique first identifier capable of being identified by a computer and also having a unique second identifier marked thereon and capable of being identified by a person, said method comprising the steps of:

preparing a ticket identifier database which associates the first identifier with the second identifier;

preparing an identifier management database which stores a status of the admission ticket in association with the first identifier;

providing a display screen to a user terminal connected via a communication network to prompt a user to input the second identifier marked on said admission ticket;
receiving said input second identifier and authenticating the user based on the second identifier;

when said authentication is obtained, providing the display screen to said user terminal and prompting the user to input reservation information including a facility name to be reserved and a reservation time;

receiving the input reservation information;

checking whether the status of the admission ticket relating to the received reservation information is "sold" by accessing the ticket identifier database and the identifier management database;

after performing the authenticating and checking steps to confirm that the admission ticket is not falsified, registering the reservation information in a facility reservation database as associated with said first identifier;

reading said first identifier of said admission ticket carried by the user who wants to enter one of the facilities installed in said site; and

referring to said facility reservation database with use of said read first identifier as a key and controlling the entrance of one of the facilities installed in the site.

The present invention relates to control of facility admission and facility reservation using a ticket. In accordance with embodiments of the invention, a person purchases a ticket to an event and reserves facility admission using the date and time of the event. Reserving facility admission before the event is held is referred to as a "previous reservation". The ticket includes a machine-readable identifier such as radio-frequency identification (RFID) or a barcode for improving reading operation efficiency. The machine-readable aspect of the ticket is not required for the previous reservation operation because, in most cases, a machine for reading the identifier would not be available.

The disclosed embodiments of the invention will now be discussed in comparison to the prior art. Of course, the discussion of the disclosed embodiments, and the discussion of the differences between the disclosed embodiments and the prior art subject matter, do not define the scope or interpretation of any of the claims. Instead, such discussed differences merely help the Examiner appreciate important claim distinctions discussed thereafter.

The claimed invention is directed to event admission and reservation using a ticket having two identifiers. As mentioned above, the ticket owner need not provide a machine for reading the identifiers.

Claim 5 provides a ticket with a machine-readable first identifier and a visual second identifier. The first identifier is stored in an integrated circuit on the ticket, while the

second identifier is printed on the ticket. The first identifier is different from the second identifier. The ticket owner can make the previous reservation using the visual second identifier and the previous reservation information is associated with the machine-readable first identifier. The first identifier is read by a machine at the event facility and the reservation information is obtained such that the ticket owner can be treated accordingly.

Since a ticket passes through many process steps (e.g., print, deliver, sell, etc.) before the ticket reaches the buyer, there are many opportunities for ticket falsification to occur. As described in claim 5, ticket falsification can be prevented by checking whether the ticket identifier is registered and whether the ticket was sold before reservation information is entered in a database. Thus, the claimed invention is effective for identifying a falsified ticket by authenticating the ticket when the owner makes the previous reservation.

In contrast, referring to Fig. 2B, *McGee* discloses a ticket including two identifiers, identifier (30) and magnetic stripe (32). (See paragraph [0041]). However, *McGee* is silent regarding the relationship between the two identifiers. The two identifiers appear the same but are stored in different locations on the ticket and in different formats. The identifiers are each read by different reading devices and improve reliability in case one of the identifiers is not readable (e.g., due to ticket damage). Accordingly, *McGee* is not the same as claim 5 because *McGee* does not disclose two different identifiers and because *McGee* does not use two identifiers for making a reservation to prevent ticket falsification.

Maeda fails to cure the deficiencies of *McGee*. *Maeda* discloses a reservation media issuing system. A reservation media issuing device issues reservation media. The reservation media contains reservation data which represents a specific reserved time and date (see claim 1). The issued media of *Maeda* already contains the reservation data. Accordingly, *Maeda* is not the same as claim 5 because in the claimed invention an admission ticket is issued without reservation information and the ticket owner makes the reservation using the identifier on the purchased ticket. *Maeda* is silent on the claimed reservation scheme using a ticket identifier.

Neither *McGee*, *Maeda* nor any of the other cited references disclose all of the features recited in independent claim 5. Claim 5 is different from the cited references because *McGee* and *Maeda* do not disclose making/managing a reservation using two different

identifiers. Specifically, *McGee* and *Maeda* do not disclose “preparing a ticket identifier database which associates the first identifier with the second identifier; preparing an identifier management database which stores a status of the admission ticket in association with the first identifier;... authenticating the user based on the second identifier;... receiving the input reservation information; [and] checking whether the status of the admission ticket relating to the received reservation information is “sold” by accessing the ticket identifier database and the identifier management database.” For at least this reason, claim 5 is allowable over the cited art.

Independent claim 19 recites features that are similar to the features recited in claim 5. As discussed above, the cited references do not disclose these features. Thus, claim 19 is also allowable over the cited art.

Claim 6 is dependent on claim 1, and claim 20 is dependent on claim 19. As discussed above, claims 5 and 19 are allowable over the cited art. Thus, claims 6 and 20 are also patentable for the reasons discussed above, as well as on their own merits.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 5, 6, 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 206-467-9600.

Respectfully submitted,

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